

## Youth Stand Up for the Right to Live and Love

Youth Pride, Inc. (YPI) stands with all who are profoundly saddened by the tragedy in Orlando, Florida. We send our condolences and support to the families and friends of all those killed or injured in the unspeakable massacre.

We have spent the week processing many different feelings and thoughts that resulted from this horrific event and wanted add the voices of young people to the community conversation.

Fernando, age 17, recently spoke to hundreds of people at a Vigil at Roger Williams Memorial Park. "Being queer stopped being about marriage and rights, and became a matter of life and death," he said. "We simply cannot let the deaths of any more LGBT people go unheard. Be twice as motivated to be who you are. Do it for yourself, your community and the victims."

"After what happened, I feel even more that we need to step up, stand up," said Teneka, age 16. "We need a new movement, after marriage, so that being LGBTQ is just a part of you, not something to be scared of or something you feel you have to hide."

And Jesus, 23, wrote, "I feel like the most we can do for people who want to see us dead is live, laugh and enjoy every day with whatever spark of pride you can carry with you. I promise I won't stop fighting for our right to live and love. I promise your death will not go forgotten. As long as oppressed people are being killed I will be here to shine for them."

YPI stands in solidarity with LGBTQ people and our allies throughout the country during this very difficult time. We stand re-committed to end the prejudice and hate directed to all marginalized communities. Join us and get involved in any way you can.

